



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

LIFE SENTENCE FOR GANG REVENGE MURDER

ICE officers convinced murder suspect by phone to surrender at U.S.-Mexico border

MINNEAPOLIS -- An illegal alien who gunned down a juvenile rival gang member was sentenced to life in prison today after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention and removal officers located him in Mexico and convinced him to turn himself in at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Arturo Martinez-Montano, 22, of Mexico, was convicted on Dec. 14 in Hennepin County District Court of four counts of first-degree homicide. He was sentenced today to life in prison, plus an additional two years because the crime was gang-related.

If Martinez-Montano is ever released from state custody, he will be turned over to ICE for removal from the United States.

“As a result of outstanding cooperation among law enforcement agencies and the courts, a killer has been brought to justice and taken off the street,” said Field Office Director Scott Baniecke. Baniecke oversees the arrest and removal of illegal aliens for a five-state area that includes Minneapolis.

Just after midnight Dec. 4, 2000, Martinez-Montano and other gang associates obtained a gun, climbed in a car and went looking for members of a rival gang, according to a criminal complaint filed in Hennepin County District Court. Their intent was to exact revenge for the shootings of two of their own gang members that had occurred about an hour before.

When the group encountered two men on foot who they knew to be rival gang members, Martinez-Montano emerged from the car and fired six or seven shots, killing the juvenile. After the shooting Martinez-Montano fled to Mexico. On Jan. 25, 2001, Martinez-Montano was indicted on four alternative counts of murder in the first degree.

The FBI's Minnesota Violent Crime Fugitive Task Force opened an investigation into the whereabouts of Martinez-Montano and contacted ICE's Detention and Removal Operations for assistance in March.

An ICE detention and removal officer located Martinez-Montano in Mexico, and during several telephone conversations persuaded him to surrender to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at the Otay Mesa, Calif. Port of Entry April 9.

"Our officer was able to convince him that the murder charge wasn't going to go away no matter what country he ran to," said Baniecke, "and that, if necessary, we had the ability to ask Mexican authorities for assistance with the case."

Two other occupants of the car at the time of the shooting, Pedro Alatorre-Guzman and Roberto Lopez-Rios, were arrested by Minneapolis police officers and were later convicted for their involvement in the crime. Alatorre-Guzman received a sentence of 22 years and 6 months; Lopez-Rios received a life sentence.

Assistant Hennepin County Attorneys Robert J. Streitz and Kerry Meyer prosecuted the Martinez-Montano case.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.